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## UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 8

999 18<sup>TH</sup> STREET - SUITE 500  
DENVER, CO 80202-2466

Ref: 8EPR-F

MAR 27 2000

Mr. Joseph Legare  
Department of Energy  
Rocky Flats Field Office  
P.O. Box 928  
Golden, CO 80402-0928

00 MAR 30 AM 6:28  
CCDH

Re: Solar Ponds Plume Project Closeout Report FY 1999

Dear Mr. Legare:

EPA has reviewed the above referenced report and has the following comments. In spite of its title, this report cannot actually closeout the Solar Ponds Plume Project, since there are many unanswered questions, especially regarding the effectiveness of the system. The document does provide a brief description of the design of the system and its construction during FY 1999. Nevertheless, a true closeout report for this project cannot be written until we have at least several months worth of data, from which some conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the collection trench and treatment system might be reached.

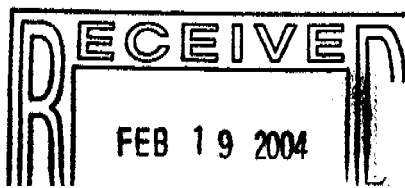
The change in location for the treatment cell necessitates that the water level in the collection trench rises above the elevation of 5885 feet in order to flow into the cell, resulting in approximately 12 feet of head in the portion of the trench adjacent to the cell. As a result of this change in design, some amount of groundwater might be preferentially flowing under the collection trench. There is also some concern that this amount of water in the trench could be detrimental to hillside slope stability. DOE needs to determine whether these concerns are potential problems, and if so, propose some type of remedy to the agencies.

As of March 22, 2000, EPA was notified that the collection trench water level had finally risen to the elevation of approximately 5885.2, which will now allow the collected water to flow into the treatment cell for the first time. Your correspondence dated March 9, 2000 stated that water has been discharging from the discharge gallery without flowing through the treatment cell. This needs to be investigated so as to determine whether there is underflow of the collection trench or some other source of the discharge. Monitoring any wells that are just downgradient of the collection trench will probably be necessary so that the question of underflow might be resolved. This may of course require that new wells be installed if there are no wells appropriately located and completed to the necessary depth.

In order to determine what data should be collected so that an improved and acceptable closeout report can be prepared and other issues mentioned above, EPA suggests that a meeting be scheduled with DOE and CDPHE in the near future. If you have any comments or

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questions regarding these matters, please contact Gary Kleeman at 312-6246.

Sincerely,



Tim Rehder, Manager  
Rocky Flats Project

cc: Norma Castaneda, DOE  
Carl Spreng, CDPHE  
Elizabeth Pottorff, CDPHE  
Lane Butler, Kaiser-Hill

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